

## Topsham Conservation Commission (TCC)

Meeting Minutes approved 04/03/23

Monday March 6, 2023 at 5:30 pm

Topsham Town Office and via Zoom

In attendance: Audie Arbo, Shana Stewart Deeds, Julie Erdman (Town Planner), Victor Langelo, Steve Pelletier

- I. Approval of Dec 2022; Jan 10, 2023 and Feb 6, 2023 minutes.

Shana made a motion to accept the December minutes as written, which was seconded by Victor and passed unanimously. Victor made a motion to accept the February minutes as written, which was seconded by Shana and passed unanimously. January minutes tabled until we have a quorum of attendees.

- II. NAP (Natural Areas Plan) Update

- A. Status of funding for consultants.
- B. Review RFP changes.

Victor, Julie and Shana discussed asking the Town Manager whether there was any funding to get the NAP update going. Julie will follow up with Derek and ask. Victor sent a communication to Judy Colby-George, he hasn't heard back yet to update prices on the estimate for work on the update. TCC is looking into other possible funding sources. The [Coastal Communities](#) grant and [Maine GOPIF](#) grant may be options, The energy Committee is applying. Julie will check in at a regional meeting on Th to look into application requirements. TCC will write a letter to the Selectboard and Town Manager regarding the importance of this update, especially in light of the Town Plan priorities. TCC is hoping to get funds for this initiative into the 2024 budget.

To consider:

- Update changes to the maps, including adding in any new Beginning with Habitat map data sources
- Changes to land use
- Changes/priorities of the community based on the new Town Plan
- Aligning the NAP with the Town Plan
- Prioritizing the local conservation of high quality natural areas in conjunction with Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust and others
- Implementation of the NAP (current and as updated)
- Build out analysis, and how things could look if all of the possible land was developed/loss of high priority natural areas (and agricultural/recreational areas?)

**Action Items: Victor will start a letter about why funding this update is important. We should shore up the RFP. Julie will see if there's a possibility for short-term funding. Ask MEACC folks if there are examples of "fails."**

III. Suggested Landscape Ordinance

- A. Review current ordinance suggestions
- B. Additions from ordinances in other towns (Steve provided South Portland and Bath examples).  
TCC members should review these see what we like and think about possible ways to incorporate ideas from other towns

**Action item: Julie will see if changes were made by consultants. All TCC members should come with ideas to the next meeting so we can workshop.**

IV. Updates

- A. Christine Cole memorial

TCC discussed the memorial. Shana will check with Sarah about ordering the tree and with Jeanne about whether they want to absorb the extra costs of planting a larger tree.

Action Item: **Julie will check with public works about whether there is someone that could help plant a larger tree with a backhoe or other large equipment.**

- B. Check in about community interest in joining the TCC

Victor did not hear from anyone with interest to join the TCC. We should invite anyone with interest to a meeting. They can come and attend, but there are currently no open seats.

- C. Budget update

Shana gave an update on account values in the budget spreadsheet after Shana, Victor and Julie met.

- D. Other

TCC needs to update our Mallet Woods easement on the first 4 conservation parcels.

**Action Item: Julie will reach out to Dan Catlin to let him know that we need to add the new parcels to the easement agreement, including the parcel between Mallet Drive and Monument Place. In 2013 A, B, C and D were added. There will be 8 at the end of phase 4, the final phase of the project, when E, F, G and H are added.**

V. Items for upcoming meetings

- A. Revise landscape ordinance at next meeting
- B. NAP RFP review over email between now and March meeting, get RFP out by April
  - 1. RFP - Focus on deliverables and be sure they match scope of services
  - 2. Letter on why it is important to update
- C. Landscape ordinance language to Re-Code efforts
- D. Head of Tide monitoring
- E. Work with BTLT to identify potential Vernal Pools where the SAMP could be used
- F. 2023 Work plan updates

Motion to adjourn by Steve at 6:58pm that was seconded by Victor. Meeting adjourned at 6:58pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Shana Stewart Deeds